# SECTION V – B CONSERVATION EFFECTS

# 2. Effects of Resource Management Systems

#### Introduction

This section describes the effects of **Resource Management Systems (RMS)** on the soil, water, air, plant, and animal (SWAPA) resources and their associated social, economic, and cultural considerations.

For each example RMS in this section, effects are displayed for the resource problems or concerns that were previously identified for each example in Section III-C-2 of the FOTG. Please note that these examples are representative of typical situations in Maryland, but do not include all possible sitespecific conditions.

Examples are organized according to the following land uses:

**Cropland** 

**Hayland** 

**Pasture** 

Woodland

**Wildlife Land** 

**Headquarters** 

## Resource Management Systems (RMS) for Cropland

**Example C1 - Existing Condition:** Highly erodible cropland fields with classic gully erosion occurring in two areas. The cropping system is continuous corn, conventionally tilled. Fertilizer is applied based on perceived crop needs, without using soil tests to determine soil nutrient levels. A significant amount of Johnsongrass (a noxious weed) is present in several areas. An adjacent downstream landowner is complaining about sediment filling up his pond, which is used by his grandchildren for fishing & swimming.

<u>Typical RMS</u>: The rotation will be modified to a corn-soybean rotation planted no-till, with a winter cover crop planted after corn. The landowner will be taking annual soil tests and applying fertilizer based on a nutrient management plan. Johnsongrass will be controlled based on Maryland Cooperative Extension recommendations. Grassed waterways will be built to replace the existing gullies. A 24-foot filter strip will be installed on the lower end of each field.

#### Planned Practices:

328 - Conservation Crop Rotation412 - Grassed Waterway329A - Residue Management: No Till,<br/>Strip Till393 - Filter Strip340 - Cover Crop590 - Nutrient Management595 - Pest Management

RESOURCE	RESOURCE CONSIDERATION	CONCERNS/PROBLEMS	EFFECTS OF THE RMS
SOIL	Erosion	Sheet and rill Classic gully Soil deposition	Beneficial: Erosion is reduced below T, the gullies are stabilized and deposition is reduced.
	Condition	None identified	None identified
	Quantity	None identified	None identified
WATER	Quality	Sediment Nutrients	Beneficial: Sediment delivery to surface water is reduced. Nutrients entering surface and groundwater are reduced.
AIR	Quality	None identified	None identified
PLANTS	Health and Productivity	Pests (noxious weeds)	Beneficial: Pest management is improved.
ANIMALS	Health and Productivity	Food, cover, and water	Beneficial: Fish habitat in neighbor's pond is improved.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS	CONCERNS/PROBLEMS	EFFECTS OF THE RMS
Social and Economic Concerns	Long-term productivity High production costs (tillage operations and fertilizer) Use of neighbor's pond impacted by excess sediment (poor quality for fishing and swimming) Aesthetics (water is often muddy)	Beneficial: Long-term productivity is maintained. Tillage and fertilizer costs are reduced. Useful life of the pond is extended. Recreational fishing and the appearance of the water is improved.
Cultural Resources	None identified	None identified

### RMS for Cropland (continued)

**Example C2 - Existing Condition:** Cropland field is relatively flat. A corn-soybean rotation is used. Some areas of the field are poorly drained and adversely affect crop production. During wet seasons, equipment tends to bog down in poorly drained soils. Fertilizer is applied based on perceived crop needs, without using soil tests to determine soil nutrient levels. Pesticide leaching is a concern due to high water tables. Soil texture is predominantly loam.

<u>Typical RMS</u>: The crop rotation and residue management already meet (and will continue to meet) NRCS conservation practice standards. A nutrient management plan will be developed by Maryland Cooperative Extension to balance crop needs and fertilizer applications. Subsurface drainage will be improved to original design (old system had failed). Pest management will be implemented, including the recommendation that the producer use pesticides with low leaching potential.

### Planned Practices:

328 – Conservation Crop Rotation

344 – Residue Management, Seasonal

590 – Nutrient Management

606 – Subsurface Drainage

595 – Pest Management

RESOURCE	RESOURCE CONSIDERATION	CONCERNS/PROBLEMS	EFFECTS OF THE RMS
SOIL	Erosion	None identified	None identified
SOIL	Condition	None identified	None identified
	Quantity	Excess subsurface water	Beneficial: Drainage is improved.
WATER		Sediment	None identified
	Quality	Nutrients Pesticides	Neutral: Subsurface drainage can increase surface water contamination by nutrients, pesticides, and other soil contaminants. Implementing nutrient management and pest management should offset this.
AIR	Quality	None identified	None identified
PLANTS	Health and Productivity	Suitability	Beneficial: Site conditions are improved to support the desired crops.
ANIMALS	Health and Productivity	None identified	None identified

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS	CONCERNS/PROBLEMS	EFFECTS OF THE RMS
Social and Economic Concerns	High production costs (time required to pull equipment out of wet areas, fertilizer costs)	Beneficial: Machinery and input costs are reduced.
Cultural Resources	None identified	None identified

### RMS for Cropland (continued)

**Example C3 - Existing Condition:** Highly erodible cropland fields with ephemeral gullies in some areas. Plants are stunted and stressed where erosion is severe. The cropping system is grain corn, conventionally tilled, with hay in the rotation. Fertilizer is applied based on perceived crop needs, without using soil tests to determine soil nutrient levels. No pest problems or pesticide concerns were noted. In one field, prehistoric artifacts were observed at the top of the slope.

<u>Typical RMS</u>: The tillage method will be modified to no-till farming. The rotation will be modified slightly to allow for contour strips to be installed. A diversion with a grassed waterway outlet is installed to control ephemeral erosion. Soils tests will be taken and fertilizer applied based on a nutrient management plan. Scouting for pests will occur to improve efficiency of control methods.

#### Planned Practices:

328 – Conservation Crop Rotation 362 – Diversion 329A – Residue Management, No-Till, 412 – Grassed Waterway

Strip Till 590 – Nutrient Management 585 – Contour Stripcropping 595 – Pest Management

RESOURCE	RESOURCE CONSIDERATION	CONCERNS/PROBLEMS	EFFECTS OF THE RMS
SOIL	Erosion IL	Sheet and rill Ephemeral gully Soil deposition	Beneficial: Erosion is reduced below T, the ephemeral gullies are controlled, and deposition is reduced.
	Condition	None identified	None identified
	Quantity	None identified	None identified
WATER	Quality	Sediment Nutrients	Beneficial: Sediment delivery to surface water is reduced. Nutrients entering surface and groundwater are reduced.
AIR	Quality	None identified	None identified
PLANTS	Health and Productivity	Suitability Establishment and Management	Beneficial: Steep, low productivity sites are planted to perennial grasses that are better adapted to site conditions. In other highly erodible areas, plant residues are managed to improve site conditions for crop growth.
ANIMALS	Health and Productivity	None identified	None identified

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS	CONCERNS/PROBLEMS	EFFECTS OF THE RMS
Social and Economic Concerns	Long-term productivity High production costs (tillage operations and fertilizer)	Beneficial: Long-term productivity is maintained. Tillage and fertilizer costs are reduced.
Cultural Resources	Degradation or damage of resources	Beneficial: Erosion is reduced and cultural resources are protected in place. (Note: Cultural resources are avoided during installation of the diversion and waterway.)

# Resource Management System (RMS) for Hayland

**Example H1 - Existing Condition:** Continuous cool-season grass hay field. The stand is thinning and productivity is low. Soil test results indicate high levels of phosphorus in the soil.

<u>Typical RMS</u>: The operator will reseed the field, and manage it by properly timing the forage harvest. Annual soil tests will be taken, and fertilizers will be applied based on a nutrient management plan.

#### Planned Practices:

- 512 Pasture and Hay Planting
- 511 Forage Harvest Management
- 590 Nutrient Management
- 393 Filter Strip

RESOURCE	RESOURCE CONSIDERATION	CONCERNS/PROBLEMS	EFFECTS OF THE RMS
SOIL	Erosion	Sheet and rill	Beneficial: Erosion is reduced.
SOIL	Condition	None identified	None identified
	Quantity	None identified	None identified
WATER	Quality	Sediment Nutrients	Beneficial: Sediment delivery to surface water is reduced. Nutrients entering surface and groundwater are reduced.
AIR	Quality	None identified	None identified
PLANTS	Health and Productivity	Nutrients	Beneficial: Nutrient management is improved; plant productivity is increased.
ANIMALS	Health and Productivity	None identified	None identified

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS	CONCERNS/PROBLEMS	EFFECTS OF THE RMS
Social and Economic Concerns	Low net return (output compared to input) on the field	Beneficial: Increased net return.
Cultural Resources	None identified	None identified

# Resource Management Systems (RMS) for Pasture

**Example P1 - Existing Condition:** Overgrazed cool-season grass pasture with weedy patches and bare soil in some areas. Livestock have a sufficient water supply and are fenced out of streams.

<u>Typical RMS</u>: Pastures will be reseeded, followed by proper grazing management. Soil tests will be taken and nutrients applied according to a nutrient management plan. Pests will be identified and controlled based on Maryland Cooperative Extension recommendations.

## Planned Practices:

512 – Pasture and Hay Planting

528A – Prescribed Grazing

595 – Pest Management

590 – Nutrient Management

RESOURCE	RESOURCE CONSIDERATION	CONCERNS/PROBLEMS	EFFECTS OF THE RMS
SOIL	Erosion	Sheet and rill	Beneficial: Erosion is reduced.
SOIL	Condition	None identified	None identified
	Quantity	None identified	None identified
WATER	Quality	Sediment Nutrients	Beneficial: Sediment delivery to surface water is reduced. Nutrients entering surface and groundwater are reduced.
AIR	Quality	None identified	None identified
PLANTS	Health and Productivity	Nutrients Pests (weeds)	Beneficial: Nutrient management is improved. Weeds are adequately controlled.
ANIMALS	Health and Productivity	Food	Beneficial: Pasture is managed to provide improved forage for livestock.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS	CONCERNS/PROBLEMS	EFFECTS OF THE RMS
Social and Economic Concerns	None identified	None identified
Cultural Resources	None identified	None identified

### RMS for Pasture (continued)

**Example P2 - Existing Condition:** Cool-season grass-legume pasture. Some areas of the pasture are heavily grazed and weedy, but cover is generally good. Livestock have unrestricted access to a trout stream, resulting in extensive bank erosion and impaired water quality for fishing. In-stream water quality tests indicate high levels of fecal coliform bacteria.

<u>Typical RMS</u>: The soils will be tested and nutrients applied based on a nutrient management plan. Better grazing management is planned. Weeds and other pests will be identified and controlled if economically feasible. Animals will be fenced out of the stream, and a spring development and trough will be installed to provide fresh drinking water for livestock. A stream crossing will be installed to provide animals with a stable place to cross the stream. High traffic areas, such as walkways, will be stabilized.

#### Planned Practices:

528A – Prescribed Grazing 728 – Stream Crossing

382 – Fence 561 – Heavy Use Area Protection

574 – Spring Development 595 – Pest Management 614 – Trough 590 – Nutrient Management

RESOURCE	RESOURCE CONSIDERATION	CONCERNS/PROBLEMS	EFFECTS OF THE RMS
SOIL	Erosion	Sheet and rill	Beneficial: Erosion in the pasture is reduced. Stream bank erosion is reduced.
	Condition	None identified	None identified
	Quantity	Insufficient water supply	Beneficial: Water is provided in the pasture to meet livestock needs.
WATER	Quality	Sediment Nutrients and organics Pathogens Aquatic habitat suitability	Beneficial: Sediment delivery to surface water is reduced. Nutrients and organics entering surface and groundwater are reduced. Pathogens are reduced. Aquatic habitat is improved.
AIR	Quality	None identified	None identified
PLANTS	Health and Productivity	Nutrients Pests (weeds)	Beneficial: Nutrient management is improved. Weeds are adequately controlled.
	Health and Productivity (Livestock)	Food Water	Beneficial: Pasture is managed to provide improved forage and an improved water supply for livestock.
ANIMALS	Health and Productivity (Fish)	Water	Beneficial: Improved aquatic habitat for fish because livestock are excluded from the stream and the pasture is better managed.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS	CONCERNS/PROBLEMS	EFFECTS OF THE RMS
Social and Economic Concerns	Stream use for fishing is impaired	Neutral: Use for fishing is improved. Installation costs may be high. May incur significant debt.
Cultural Resources	None identified	None identified

# Resource Management Systems (RMS) for Woodland

**Example W1 - Existing Condition:** An existing woodlot has not been managed. Some valuable trees are present, but there are also invasive species in some areas. No erosion problems or other resource concerns were noted.

<u>Typical RMS</u>: A professional forester will be hired to complete a forest stand evaluation and give recommendations for improving the stand. Invasive species will be controlled if economically feasible.

### Planned Practices:

666 - Forest Stand Improvement

595 – Pest Management

RESOURCE	RESOURCE CONSIDERATION	CONCERNS/PROBLEMS	EFFECTS OF THE RMS
SOIL	Erosion Condition	None identified	None identified
WATER	Quantity Quality	None identified	None identified
AIR	Quality	None identified	None identified
PLANTS	Health and Productivity	Establishment and management Pests (invasive species)	Beneficial: Invasive species are controlled. Growth of desirable species is improved.
ANIMALS	Health and Productivity	None identified	None identified

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS	CONCERNS/PROBLEMS	EFFECTS OF THE RMS
Social and Economic Concerns	None identified	None identified
Cultural Resources	None identified	None identified

## RMS for Woodland (continued)

**Example W2 - Existing Condition:** An existing crop field has reduced yields because of shallow soils. It is also becoming difficult to farm because of its location near an expanding urban area. The only access to the field is from a heavily traveled highway.

<u>Typical RMS</u>: The existing crop field will be converted to a Christmas tree farm. Grass will be planted prior to tree planting to help control erosion between the rows. Soil will be tested and nutrients applied based on a nutrient management plan. Scouts will assess pest problems and make recommendations for control if economically feasible.

### Planned Practices:

- 612 Tree Planting
- 327 Conservation Cover (establish grass between the rows)
- 590 Nutrient Management
- 595 Pest Management

RESOURCE	RESOURCE CONSIDERATION	CONCERNS/PROBLEMS	EFFECTS OF THE RMS
SOIL	Erosion	Sheet and rill	Beneficial: Erosion is reduced.
SOIL	Condition	None identified	None identified
	Quantity	None identified	None identified
WATER	Quality	Sediment Nutrients	Beneficial: Sediment delivery to surface water is reduced. Nutrients entering surface and groundwater are reduced.
AIR	Quality	None identified	None identified
PLANTS	Health and Productivity	Pests (insects and weeds)	Beneficial: Pests are adequately controlled. Trees are selected that are suitable to the site conditions.
ANIMALS	Health and Productivity	None identified	None identified

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS	CONCERNS/PROBLEMS	EFFECTS OF THE RMS
Social and Economic Concerns	Transporting farm equipment on a heavily used road in an urbanizing area	Beneficial: Income stream is modified (7 to 9 year period between tree establishment and harvest). Farm income is diversified. Combine will not need to be transported to the field on a heavily used road.
Cultural Resources	None identified	None identified

## Resource Management Systems (RMS) for Wildlife Land

**Example WL1 - Existing Condition:** Area is a 3-acre lawn consisting of frequently mowed cool-season grasses. The landowner wants to establish and maintain native warm-season grasses and wildflowers for upland wildlife habitat. Existing turf is dense and is fertilized several times during the growing season based on turf color. No soil tests have been used to determine soil nutrient levels. Insecticides are periodically applied for "preventive" purposes, regardless of whether or not insect pests are actually present.

<u>Typical RMS</u>: The area will be established to native warm-season grasses beneficial to wildlife. The area will be managed for wildlife habitat. Soil tests will be done before establishment and nutrients will be applied if needed based on test results. Pests will be monitored and controlled if necessary.

### Planned Practices:

327 – Conservation Cover

590 – Nutrient Management

595 – Pest Management

645 – Upland Wildlife Habitat Management

RESOURCE	RESOURCE CONSIDERATION	CONCERNS/PROBLEMS	EFFECTS OF THE RMS
SOIL	Erosion Condition	None identified	None identified
	Quantity	None identified	None identified
WATER	Quality	Nutrients Pesticides	Beneficial: Nutrients and pesticides entering surface and groundwater are reduced.
AIR	Quality	None identified	None identified
PLANTS	Health and Productivity	Pests (weeds)	Beneficial: Undesirable competitive weeds are adequately controlled, especially during establishment of the desired species.
ANIMALS	Health and Productivity	Food and cover	Beneficial: Food and cover are increased.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS	CONCERNS/PROBLEMS	EFFECTS OF THE RMS
Social and Economic Concerns	Excess fertilizer and insecticide costs	Neutral: Establishment costs are offset by reduced input costs.
Cultural Resources	None identified	None identified

### RMS for Wildlife Land (continued)

**Example WL2 - Existing Condition:** A small field of continuous soybeans is gently sloping to a low area at one end of the field. The landowner wants to convert the entire field into a shallow water area (with herbaceous buffer) to provide wetland wildlife habitat. A site investigation revealed the presence of prehistoric artifacts at the high end of the field.

<u>Typical RMS</u>: The low area of the field will be converted into a shallow water area for wildlife. A small earthen berm will be constructed outside of the area of cultural resources concern. The berm and buffer (including the cultural resources site) will be planted to native warm season grasses and wildflowers. The area will be managed for wildlife. Weeds will be controlled during establishment according to practice recommendations. Pests will be monitored and controlled if necessary based on Maryland Cooperative Extension recommendations.

#### Planned Practices:

646 – Shallow Water Area for Wildlife

644 – Wetland Wildlife Habitat Management

595 – Pest Management

RESOURCE	RESOURCE CONSIDERATION	CONCERNS/PROBLEMS	EFFECTS OF THE RMS
SOIL	Erosion	Sheet and rill	Beneficial: Erosion is reduced.
SOIL	Condition	None identified	None identified
	Quantity	None identified	None identified
WATER	Quality	Nutrients and organics	Detrimental: High populations of waterfowl may increase nutrients and organics in surface waters.
AIR	Quality	None identified	None identified
PLANTS	Health and Productivity	Pests (weeds)	Beneficial: Undesirable competitive weeds are adequately controlled, especially during establishment of the desired species.
ANIMALS	Health and Productivity	Food, cover, and water	Beneficial: Food, cover, and water are increased.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS	CONCERNS/PROBLEMS	EFFECTS OF THE RMS
Social and Economic Concerns	None identified	Neutral: Installation and maintenance costs may be higher than when the field was in an agricultural use. There is the potential for fee hunting to diversify farm income.
Cultural Resources	Degradation or damage of resources	Beneficial: Erosion is reduced and cultural resources are protected in place. (Note: Cultural resources are avoided during installation of the shallow water area.)

## Resource Management Systems (RMS) for Headquarters

**Example HQ1 - Existing Condition:** Headquarters at a poultry operation consists of three chicken houses, with the landowner's house nearby. Adjacent neighbors have complained about particulates blown by tunnel fans, and excessive odors. Dead poultry are placed in open area behind the houses, and are usually buried a few days later. Manure/litter from house cleanout is stacked on bare ground where soils have a seasonal high water table. It is periodically hauled off-site for use elsewhere.

<u>Typical RMS</u>: The landowner will install a waste storage structure to store the waste after cleanout, and a composting facility to take care of normal mortality. A windbreak will be established to help control particulates and odors from the tunnel fans.

### Planned Practices:

561 - Heavy Use Area Protection
313 - Waste Storage Structure
633 - Waste Utilization

317 - Composting Facility 380 - Windbreak/Shelterbelt Establishment

Note: Use 590 - Nutrient Management and 633 - Waste Utilization on cropland and other land uses where animal waste will be applied.

RESOURCE	RESOURCE CONSIDERATION	CONCERNS/PROBLEMS	EFFECTS OF THE RMS
SOIL	Erosion	Sheet and rill	Beneficial: Erosion is reduced.
SOIL	Condition	None identified	None identified
	Quantity	None identified	None identified
WATER	Quality	Nutrients and organics Pathogens	Beneficial: Nutrients entering surface and groundwater are reduced. Pathogens from disposal of dead poultry are eliminated.
AIR	Quality	Airborne particulates Airborne odors	Beneficial: Particulates from tunnel fans are controlled. Odors are reduced.
PLANTS	Health and Productivity	None identified	None identified
ANIMALS	Health and Productivity	None identified	None identified

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS	CONCERNS/PROBLEMS	EFFECTS OF THE RMS
Social and Economic Concerns	Quality of life for neighbors	Beneficial: Particulates and odors are reduced in the neighboring community.
Cultural Resources	None identified	None identified

### RMS for Headquarters (continued)

**Example HQ2 - Existing Condition:** Headquarters at a dairy operation that is milking 200 head. Livestock walkways and loafing areas are very muddy in wet weather, and it is difficult to remove accumulated manure. A significant amount of time is spent preparing cows for milking. Although livestock are fenced out of a stream adjacent to the loafing area, the stream is heavily contaminated with manure runoff from the barnyard. Manure is hauled and spread frequently, usually on a daily basis. Neighbors have complained about odors.

<u>Typical RMS</u>: A stable base material will be installed on livestock walkways and loafing areas. Roof gutters will be installed to divert clean water away from the contaminated barnyard. A waste storage structure will be built to store manure and wastewater. A wastewater treatment strip will be installed downslope from the barnyard to reduce contaminated runoff entering the stream.

### Planned Practices:

561 – Heavy Use Area Protection
313 – Waste Storage Structure
558 – Roof Runoff Structure
558 – Wastewater Treatment Strip
590 – Nutrient Management
633 – Waste Utilization

Note: Use 590 - Nutrient Management and 633 - Waste Utilization on cropland and other land uses where animal waste will be applied.

RESOURCE	RESOURCE CONSIDERATION	CONCERNS/PROBLEMS	EFFECTS OF THE RMS
SOIL	Erosion	Sheet and rill	Beneficial: Erosion is reduced.
SOIL	Condition	None identified	None identified
WATER	Quantity	None identified	None identified
	Quality	Nutrients and organics Pathogens	Beneficial: Nutrients and organics entering surface and groundwater are reduced. Pathogens are reduced.
AIR	Quality	Airborne odors	Beneficial: Odors are controlled.
PLANTS	Health and Productivity	None identified	None identified
ANIMALS	Health and Productivity	Growth, reproduction, and condition	Beneficial: Livestock health is improved by better management of the headquarters area.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS	CONCERNS/PROBLEMS	EFFECTS OF THE RMS
Social and Economic Concerns	Quality of life for neighbors Inefficient use of time, labor, and equipment (daily haul, preparing cows for milking)	Beneficial: Odors are reduced in the neighboring community. More efficient use of time (less frequent hauling of manure, less time cleaning up cows). May extend the useful life of the manure spreader. High installation costs (could incur significant debt).
Cultural Resources	None identified	None identified

## **RMS for Headquarters (continued)**

**Example HQ3 - Existing Condition:** Farmstead with no livestock. Heavily used areas around the house and equipment sheds were previously planted to grass, but cover is now sparse and some erosion is occurring. The farm lane is rough and uneven in some spots. Access is difficult in wet weather.

<u>Typical RMS</u>: The farm lane will be improved by leveling some areas and diverting water from the lane. Grass species appropriate for the soil type will be planted on areas that are sparse.

#### Planned Practices:

342 – Critical Area Planting

560 - Access Road

RESOURCE	RESOURCE CONSIDERATION	CONCERNS/PROBLEMS	EFFECTS OF THE RMS
SOIL	Erosion	Sheet and rill	Beneficial: Erosion is reduced.
	Condition	None identified	None identified
WATER	Quantity	None identified	None identified
	Quality	Sediment	Beneficial: Sediment delivery to surface waters is reduced.
AIR	Quality	None identified	None identified
PLANTS	Health and Productivity	Suitability	Beneficial: Bare areas are planted to perennial grasses that are better adapted to site conditions.
ANIMALS	Health and Productivity	None identified	None identified

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS	CONCERNS/PROBLEMS	EFFECTS OF THE RMS
Social and Economic Concerns	Aesthetics (bare areas near the farmstead, rutted lane)	Beneficial: Aesthetics are improved.
Cultural Resources	None identified	None identified